

ADTA News



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BCTF Advantage. Check it out!

The new BCTF member benefits plan, **BCTF Advantage**, is up and running. This voluntary plan provides members with special offers, including vacation travel, insurance products, and retail advantages. Go to bctf.ca for more information and for easy online access to the plan.



Factor 88? Don't wait!

Teachers who have reached the factor 88, age plus contributory service with the teachers or municipal

pension plan, and have 100 sick days or more saved may voluntarily withdraw from the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan: Long Term. If you have reached age 65 or factor 90, you are no longer eligible for long-term benefits and should withdraw. It is necessary for you to apply to withdraw.

Send a completed form, available from Income Security, local presidents, or online at bctf.ca/pensions/salary/LT-WithdrawalForm.shtml, to the BCTF Income Security Division.

Benefits

If you are recently married planning to get married soon or have children be sure to enroll your dependents on the insurance plan as soon as possible. If they join at a later date the insurer could ask them to complete evidence of insurability forms which must be approved by the insurance company.

College of Teachers Fee Reimbursement

2:18.2 Upon written application to the Human Resources Department, including the original of the College fee receipt, substitute teachers who have worked for the Board for forty (40) FTE days in any one (1) school year shall be eligible for reimbursement of the annual College membership fee.

TEACHERS' ON CALL EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

3:6.1 The Board shall maintain a list of teachers selected to relieve in a temporary or continuing position on a day to day basis. The Board shall forward a copy of this list to the Association by October 15, January 31, and May 31 each year. 3:6.2 The Board may add or delete names on the teacher on call list throughout the year. The Board shall not remove the name of a teacher from the teacher on call list for arbitrary or discriminatory reasons. The Association will be informed of any teacher removed from the list. 3:6.3 Notwithstanding Article 3:6.2, the Board may remove a teacher on call from the teacher on call list: 3:6.3.1 if the teacher on call has not worked within the District in three (3) months; 3:6.3.2 if the teacher on call is called and refuses three (3) consecutive assignments for which he/she is qualified. 3:6.3.3 The Board will not remove a teacher on call from the teacher on call list in accordance with Article 3:6.3 provided the teacher on call has advised the Board in advance, in writing, that he/she is not available.

FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD

During the November 5, 2007 School Board meeting Trustees discussed the suitability of Al Gore's documentary, An Inconvenient Truth, for classroom use. One trustee commented that global warming was not proven.

I suppose that several hundred scientists, possessing doctoral degrees earned at real universities, all leaders in fields associated with climatology, with thousands of peer reviewed research papers to their credit, could be completely wrong. But then scientists do not characterize their work as "proven", only that the results lead to conclusions within specified limits of uncertainty. In the case of global warming, however, those limits are cautiously small, lending credibility to the conclusions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

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HEALTH & SAFETY

REPORTING INJURIES: All injuries, including potential exposure to diseases and toxic substances, must be reported on WCB form 6A, copies of which should be available in your school. A whiff of some noxious substance or contact with pathogenic bacteria in the well-aimed expectorations of a violent student may not cause immediate harm but could cause physical ill in the future. If not reported immediately any claim for WCB benefits could be denied. Please do not hesitate to complete those 6A's.

Refer: Workers' Compensation Act http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/W/96492_00.htm

Refer: WCA Regulations
<http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/Home.asp>

Foundation Skills Assessment Large-scale testing is bad for students

Teachers are concerned that FSA tests are having a negative effect on student learning and that the results are being misused. The FSA test results are not used to determine which schools need more support and resources. The most obvious use of the results is to provide the Fraser Institute with the opportunity to devise a contrived ranking system for our schools. It is a sad commentary on the priorities of the government that more is spent annually on FSA testing at the Grades 4 and 7 levels than on textbooks for the whole K-12 public school system.

According to the research, common negative effects of large-scale testing include:

- Loss of instructional time to practice tests
- Narrowing of the curriculum and instructional methods by teachers who are under pressure to have their students do well on the tests
- Less successful students concluding that they are unable to succeed and decreasing their effort to learn
- Inappropriately generalizing test results to overall value or intelligence.

Research shows that, in contrast to the negative effects of external tests like the FSA, effective classroom assessment can improve students' learning substantially and helps low achievers the most. Prior to large-scale testing in the UK there was no correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement. After the introduction of large-scale testing, low-achieving students had lower self-esteem than higher-achieving students did.

The results of the FSA test are currently being abused. The Fraser Institute purports to be able to rank schools based on FSA results. The media reports the Fraser Institute rankings as if they represent valid conclusions. The results are frequently reported without enough information to tell if they are meaningful. If a school has 30 pupils per grade or fewer, the results are not reliable. The FSA results are not reliable for half of the elementary schools in the province. If the participation rate goes down but the results go up, it is not a valid comparison.

The FSA tests are not an accurate measure of our students, or our schools, and the results are misused. We want parents to know that FSA testing can have negative effects on their children, especially children struggling with academics.

Our children deserve to be supported and educated at school, not undermined by ill-conceived forms of accountability.

For more information go to www.bctf.ca.